

NORTH *Bi* NORTHWEST

Newsletter of the Seattle Bisexual Women's Network, a member project of Gay Community Social Services

August-September-October, 1997

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Volume 10, Issue 2

BI DECISIONS

By Leilani

The decisions I have faced in getting health care are whether to be out as a bisexual, to mention I'm also non-monogamous, to educate my practitioners about these two topics, and to face possible discrimination from the gay community's providers. It is a very personal decision whether or not to be out. I often find that once out, I end up educating people about what it means to be a bisexual. Since behavior and identity don't necessarily match, this explanation has to be somewhat broad and vague. I know gay men and lesbians that sleep with the opposite sex and straight people who have had same sex lovers. Some people choose to differentiate between people they have sex with and people they could be life partners with. I cannot even begin to make a definition of bisexuality that would work for anyone but me. Because I am attracted to people regardless of gender for relationships, friendships, sex, and play, I personally feel the bi label fits me. There are so many labels people use and some people that refuse to be labeled. Labeling myself bi pits me against both heterosexism (discrimination based on the false belief that everyone should be straight) and monosexism (discrimination based on the

misconception that everyone should be either straight or gay.)

Once the discussion of bisexuality is over, then at some point, I consider bringing up my multi-relationship status. I prefer the term polyamory (loving many) versus non-monogamous. If outing myself, as polyamorous doesn't turn into a scene, where whomever I'm talking to thinks I'm a carrier of disease, relationship addict, or confused lesbian (or straight), then lots of personal questions arise. How do you fit more than one relationship into your life? What about jealousy? What safer-sex precautions do you take? How can you honestly say you love someone and then go off and sleep with someone else? Is one person just not enough? Don't you really know which sex you prefer or lean towards? Occasionally, I will take the time to answer some of these less offensive questions by saying something about honesty, latex, and a daytimer being some of my best friends. Other times I will suggest one of the many books on bisexuality or polyamory. But I don't always feel like educating everyone I talk to or doing so with health care

(Continued on page 4)

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North Bi Northwest is the bimonthly newsletter of the Seattle Bisexual Women's Network. It is produced by women and is feminist in content. We feature news and events pertinent to the bisexual community, plus creative writing, artwork, and an advice column.

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We welcome submissions from women and men that concern feminism, politics, sexuality, or anything of interest to bisexual women. Help define our culture! Share your histories, anger, pleasure, energy. Send us your essays, poetry, photographs, drawings, book reviews, short stories, interviews, media reports, rants, cartoons, erotica, journals, theory, conversations and letters. You're important

to us and what you have to say is important to everyone.

We accept submissions on disk with hard copy (PC), typed, legibly handwritten or by E-mail (nbiniw@aol.com). If you send us something to print, you get a free issue; send six and get a year's subscription! Let us know what pseudonym you use, if you do not want to publish under your everyday name.

Views expressed in *North Bi Northwest* are those of the individual authors and do not necessarily represent the views of SBWN. *Inclusion in this publication does not indicate author's sexual orientation.*

Deadline for submissions to the new issue: October 15, 1997.

North Bi Northwest is printed on bi paper! (50% recycled)

SBWN Statement of Purpose

We are a group of women from diverse backgrounds working to create a feminist bisexual support network. We promote, in both the heterosexual world and in the lesbian/gay community, the understanding and acceptance of bisexuality as one of many valid sexual identities.

We regard ourselves as part of the community united against heterosexism and homophobia. We are dedicated to the right of all people to define their own sexuality, free from any social, political, or economic coercion. The discriminations we face based on our gender and our sexuality are not the only forms of oppression. We recognize that oppres-

sion is non-hierarchical and that none of us is free until all of us are free. We have invested ourselves in the feminist struggle to transform our culture into one free of all forms of bigotry, hatred, and exploitation.

We seek to provide a safe place for women to explore all aspects of their sexual orientation and identity. All women are welcome to attend SBWN activities. We are exclusively a women's group in order to create a safe space for women's expression and leadership. We come together to affirm ourselves and our choices.

North Bi Northwest

Editorial Team:

Cyprienne Schroepel,

Lizabeth Collier,

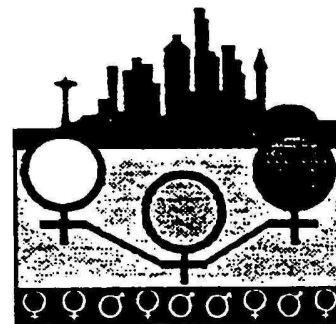
and other volunteers

Distribution:

Bettykay, K Zimmer,

and volunteers

Seattle Bisexual Women's Network



PO Box 30645

Greenwood Station

Seattle, WA 98103-0645

SBWN can always use volunteers to help with a variety of tasks. Give us a call or talk to a facilitator at a meeting.

North Bi Northwest is available by subscription (see above) or at area bookstores and newsstands, including: in Seattle, **Red and Black Books, Beyond the Closet, Bailey Coy Books, Fremont Place Book Company, and Toys in Babeland.**

North Bi Northwest is a publication of the Seattle Bisexual Women's Network, a member project of Gay Community Social Services, PO Box 2228, Seattle, WA 98122-0228. (Not for correspondence with SBWN or *North Bi Northwest*).

From the
Editor...

Hello again. I thought that working on my second issue of the newsletter would be easier than the first. I'd have done it once, some of the work from the first issue could be reused (standard stuff like the second page) and wouldn't have to be scanned and reedited; people would send in lots of stuff for me to print, etcetera. These things are true, except the last, but there turns out to be only slightly less time involved. Maybe next time it will get easier and I'll be able to get everything done ahead of time instead of feeling pressured when push comes to shove. Now if I can just figure out how to get everyone, who listened to me pleading for material to publish in the newsletter, to produce and send it to me I'll be all set. The weather, which finally started to resemble summer, actually hindered my progress. It discouraged me from working by getting hot every afternoon, sapping my strength and will to work. Having an eleven-year-old at home all day every day and hogging the computer didn't help either. When he was finished with the computer he'd start complaining about being bored and having nothing to do. Last week I sent him off to Massachusetts to engage his older brother for a while. It gives me a chance to work on the newsletter, try to finish a weaving project that is overdue and maybe get some time to just be an adult with no children in residence. Sit back, kick off my shoes, read a book, breathe deeply and generally relax. Of course, I can't ignore the cats or my husband who's busy proving that Microserfs really do exist.

The weekly meetings are going well though somewhat sparsely attended. We've been collecting comments from the participants at the end of the meetings and some of them are included in this issue. We should have more by the next issue. You can see what you are missing by not attending the meetings.

Also this issue we have lots of photographs from our SBWN contingent at Pride and our booth with massage and body painting. Send in those cards and letters folks, those hot, steamy love poems, those well thought out articles on bi issues, those intelligent book reviews, those imaginative stories. If you write them, we will print them!

Cyprienne

o H o



(Continued from page 1)

providers. The last provider I had told me that a discharge I was having, "must just be what my body was doing, since it wasn't yeast or bacteria and I was married and using condoms for birth control." I was angry that it didn't occur to her that more than half of supposedly monogamous people cheat, and most monogamous people are serial monogamists --- going from one relationship to the next in varying lengths of time. After much discussion with some girlfriends, I figured out I had developed a sensitivity to nonoxynol-9. I want health care practitioners that believe in treating the whole person and that includes knowledge about relationship orientation.

For the most part, the discrimination I've faced has been in the het world; therefore, I have looked to the queer community for support. The relationships I have developed through volunteering for the NW AIDS Foundation, Seattle Bisexual Women's Network, and Sisters Health Services have made me feel a part of the community. I think once most people get to know me and see that I'm not deceiving anyone and am not confused about who I am, the biphobic remarks are rare. I've had a couple of unpleasant things said to me directly about my bisexuality. It's when people don't know that I'm bi that I hear the crueler statements, which just makes me wonder if the queers I know are just being nice to my face. A bi friend of mine told me that five years ago the bi contingent in Gay Pride was openly booed. I'm glad I missed it. I have marched in the parade for the last four years, and the cheers and warm responses are all I see

and hear. I later heard from friends in the crowd that there are still negative reactions, they're just not as loud. When I think about biphobia in the queer community, I wonder if some of it is due to personal experiences. There have been bi women who've not disclosed their orientation for fear of rejection by lesbians, which just furthers the idea of bi's being deceptive. I can understand why some people think bi's are confused when orientation for some can be a fluid thing just as gender isn't black or white for everyone. The only answer I see is for honesty and openness. In my experience, the queer community is striving to become more inclusive of bi's, and bi's need to step forward and speak up making their presence known. I still may feel a bit nervous and tentative about how I'll be treated by queer community health care providers, but I have to be myself and honor who it is I am.

Seattle Bisexual Women's Network

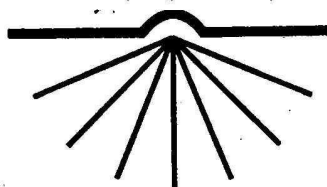
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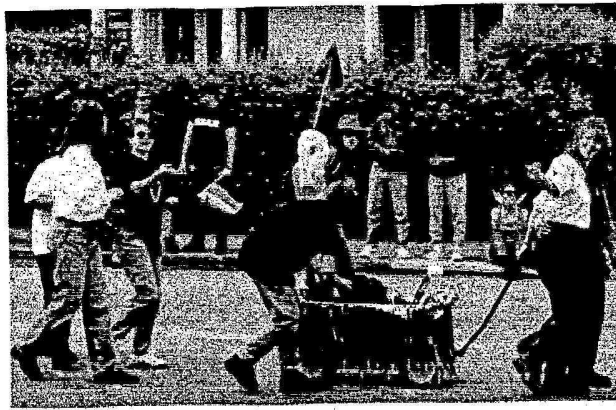
Sisters Health Services

500 19th Avenue East, Seattle, WA 98112
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Provides: low-cost health care to lesbian, bisexual, and transgendered women



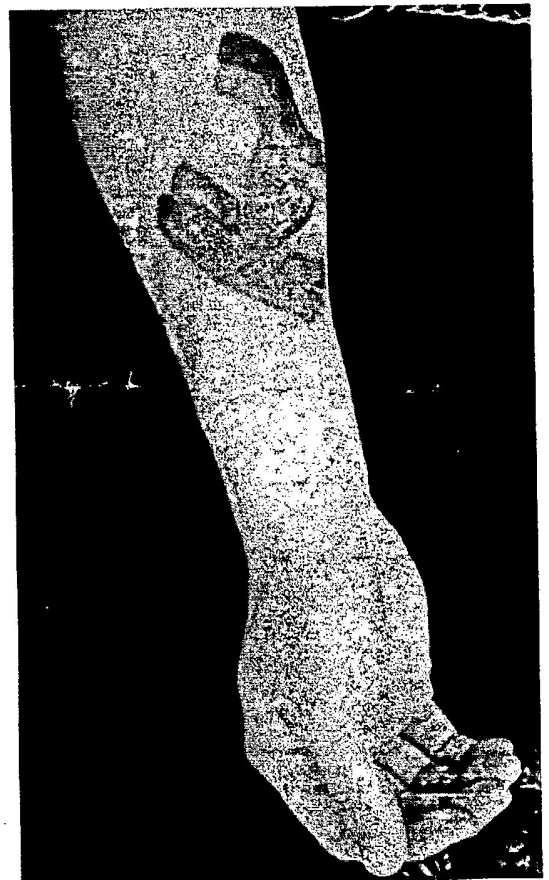
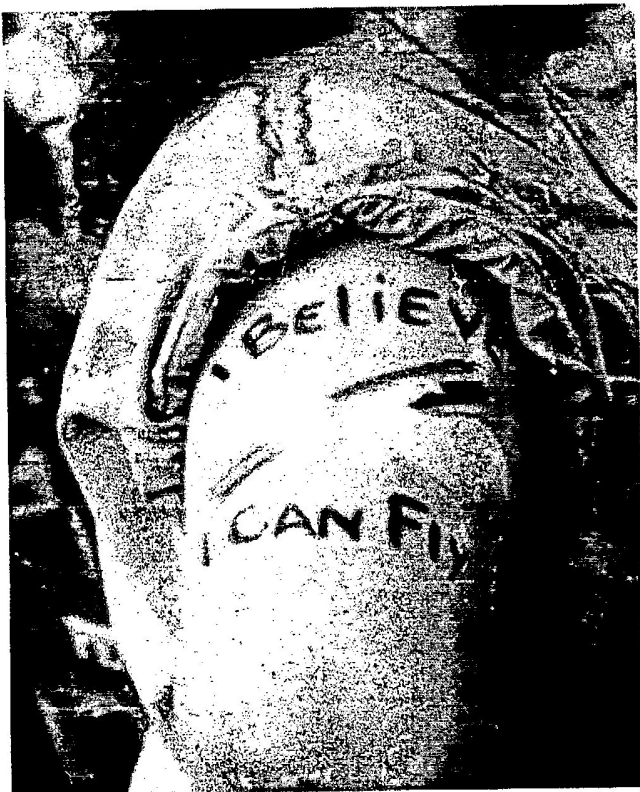
Pride '97

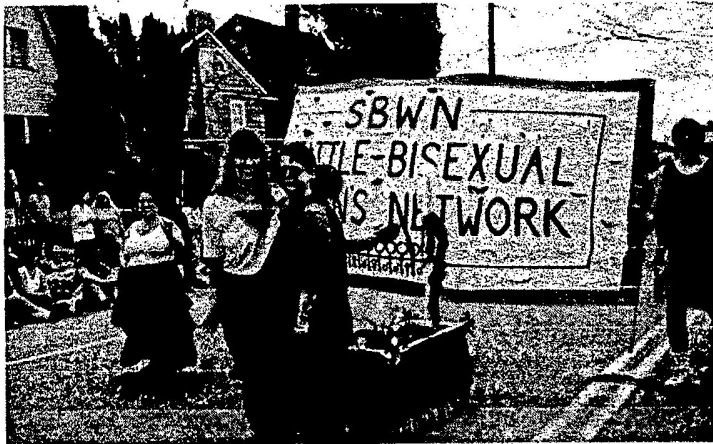


Comments on Seattle Pride 1997

"Gay/Lesbian/Bi/Transgender Pride '97 was fabulous! I loved our little float (a decorated little red wagon). We never can have enough stuff to hand out. We actually seemed to be cheered even more than last year. I also really enjoyed massaging folks for "\$" for SBWN. I loved the art Kellie body painted on me. I had a blast over all. The only thing I would have done differently was sleep some the night before." Leilani

"My first Seattle Pride was great. Setting up the SBWN booth in the rain was an interesting group experience. Once we arrived at our designated marching position there was plenty of time before the march started to run off and stand in a long, long line to use a bathroom. There were lots of people who, curiously, resisted my efforts to give them a sugar rush from our candy hand-outs but we ran out anyway before the end of the route. Sitting the booth was fun. Lots of people stopped in to buy our buttons and say hello. At the end of the day I was too tired to party, maybe next year?" Cyprienne





The Dream Believer

Your hair flows in the wind like the branches of a willow

Your smile so sweet, like the sap of a maple

Bright sparkles from the shine in your eyes

A kiss so tender; makes me want to cry

You are a dream, a far away dream

Where did you come from? I'll never know

I don't need to know

Your touch so gentle, oh please, take it slow

Savor the moment; let it last forever

Hold me, hold me; never let me go

I'm left with a feeling I've never felt

Is this reality? No, it can't be

I don't know where I am but I don't care

As long as I'm with you, that's all that matters to me

You are a vision of beauty that lies beyond Earth

For there is no way a being like you could originate

From this world

Your caress could last a million lifetimes

If this is a dream, please don't ever wake me

If this was meant to be, that's fine with me

If this was meant to end, forget it

I'm not coming back

So, take me with you; don't leave me behind

For I'm a dream believer; I belong with a dream

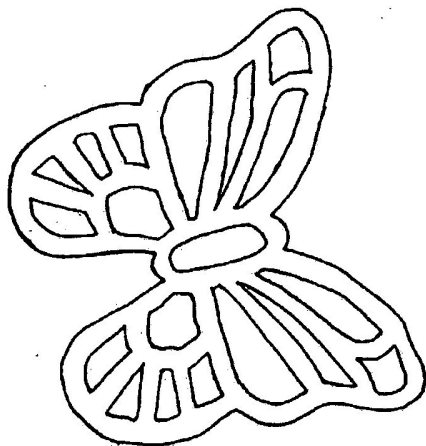
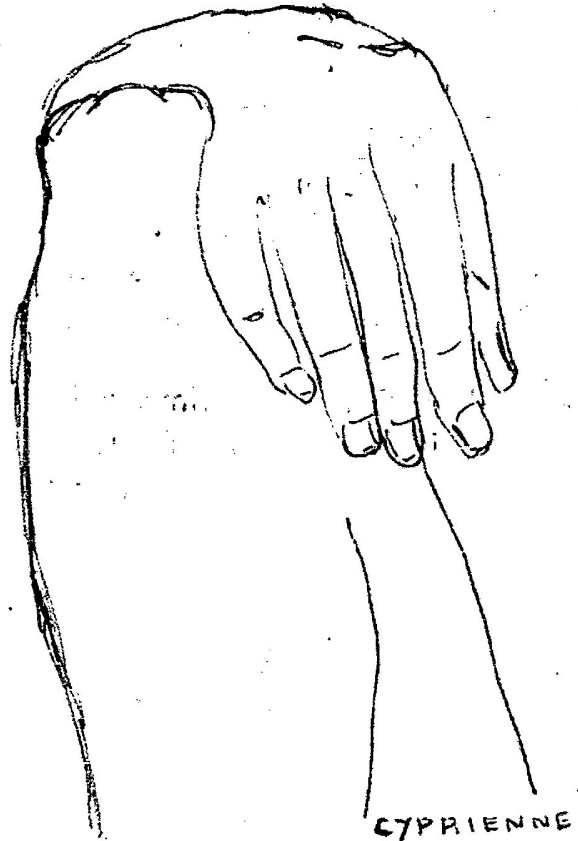
Reality is only temporary;

But dreams are everlasting.

Eva

Home Alone

I spent my time all alone
A quiet evening by the phone
No friends did call
No one did care
In fact, I think
No one would dare
No buzzers buzzed
No bell did ring
All by myself
I sat and sang
I thought of
Busy times that were
When of my friends
I could be sure
Where have they gone
Where are they now
I wish I knew
Somewhere, somehow
I wish they were
With me right now.
Cyprienne



Eve

The world is all grey and cold and wet.
Here I am sleeping with someone I just met.
She's tall and slim with short red hair,
And to touch her in passion, I do not dare.
I met her in Boston and took her away,
To show her the world and teach her to play.
Cyprienne

Foods That Heal Quiz

In May we had a meeting with this topic. Leilani made up this quiz to challenge us at the meeting. Her sources of information were Prescription for Nutritional Healing by James and Phyllis Balch, MD's, "Everytimes" (Enhancing your life through proper nutrition) Magazines and "Better Nutrition" Magazines.

1. This herb is relaxing, anti-viral and good for insomnia, nervous stomach and heart condition. It smells great and makes a wonderful tea.
2. This mineral supplement assists in weight loss, helps increase nonfat body mass and decrease body fat. helps curb sugary food cravings and stabilizes the body's sugar levels.
3. This is the relaxing, sleepy time tea. People shouldn't take this herb continuously and people with hayfever should not take it.
4. This herb bolsters the immune system and dries up the body's mucous membranes. Commonly taken for colds and other viruses.
5. This herb purifies blood and the liver, aids digestion, encourages free flow of urine, reduces cholesterol and uric acid, treats cramps, constipation, rheumatism, anemia, gout and detoxifies the body.
6. This is taken for mental acuity, immune function and most commonly for energy.
7. This tea aids digestion and all related digestive problems.
8. This food supplement/tea/root is used for colitis, diverticulosis, nausea, gas, indigestion, vomiting, hot flashes, morning sickness, menstrual cramps, cleanses the colon, stimulates circulation and reduces spasms/cramps.
9. This root/tea is used in the treatment of hot flashes, menopause, PMS, vaginal dryness and increases the effect of ovarian and testicular hormones.
10. This food supplement contains gamma-linolenic acid (GLA), linoleic and arachidonic acids, high amounts of B12, high iron content, 60-70 percent protein content, the essential amino acids, RNA and DNA nucleic acids, chlorophyll, reduces cholesterol, aids mineral absorption, curbs appetite, and helps stabilize the blood sugar level (due to it's high protein content).
11. This plant is commonly used to treat burns. It can be taken internally and treats ulcers, digestion related problems, detoxifies the body, and helps with weight loss.
12. This is the "memory herb". It's effects are improved short term memory, concentration, recall and overall mental acuity.
13. This herb is taken for stress and to help sleep, to relieve cluster headaches and pain.
14. This supplement should be refrigerated. It protects against colon cancer, may help prevent breast and other estrogen related cancers, and is most commonly taken for it's friendly flora contents for the digestive and urinary tracts.

(Continued on page 11)

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(Continued from page 10)

15. This herb is used as a seasoning and can be a tea. It's good for sinusitis, asthma, eliminates gas and reduces fever, headache and mucous. It's good for chronic respiratory problems, cold, flu, sore throat, and it lowers cholesterol levels.
16. This herb bolsters the immune system by increasing white cell phagocytosis and should be taken in cycles rather than continuously.
17. These seeds/tea are used for female disorders, colon problems, inflammation and tumors, promotes strong nails, bones, teeth and healthy skin.
18. This food supplement is recommended for it's prevention of bacterial growth in the urinary system due to it's hipuric acid content and is a good source of vitamin C.

(Continued on page 12)

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Comments from women attending weekly SBWN meetings will be a new feature in the newsletter.

Aromatherapy July 7, 1997

"Never had someone tell me I'm in drag before..."

"Pleasantly surprised I didn't get as bad of a headache as I thought I'd get."

"It was interesting to smell all the scents."

"Need more articles for the newsletter."

"Feel much more relaxed than when I got here. I really like the aromatherapy stuff. My sensuality is very tied to smells."

"Had a good time. I like learning new things. I like meetings that teach me new things especially relaxing, self-care, and balance things."

"Leaving feeling more relaxed and calmer than when I came and some of my needs were met."

"Came to aromatherapy topic and it was

very nice to be and relax."

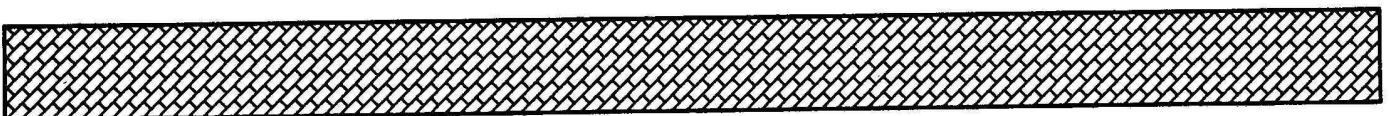
"I take care of myself so I can teach others to pamper and take care of themselves. That's what I wanted to share today."
(facilitator)

You're Bi and They're Not: Mixed Relationships August 4, 1997

"It doesn't matter that I'm bi and they're not but that we truly respect each other's identities."

"Being non-judgemental and supportive, being valued is the most important thing."

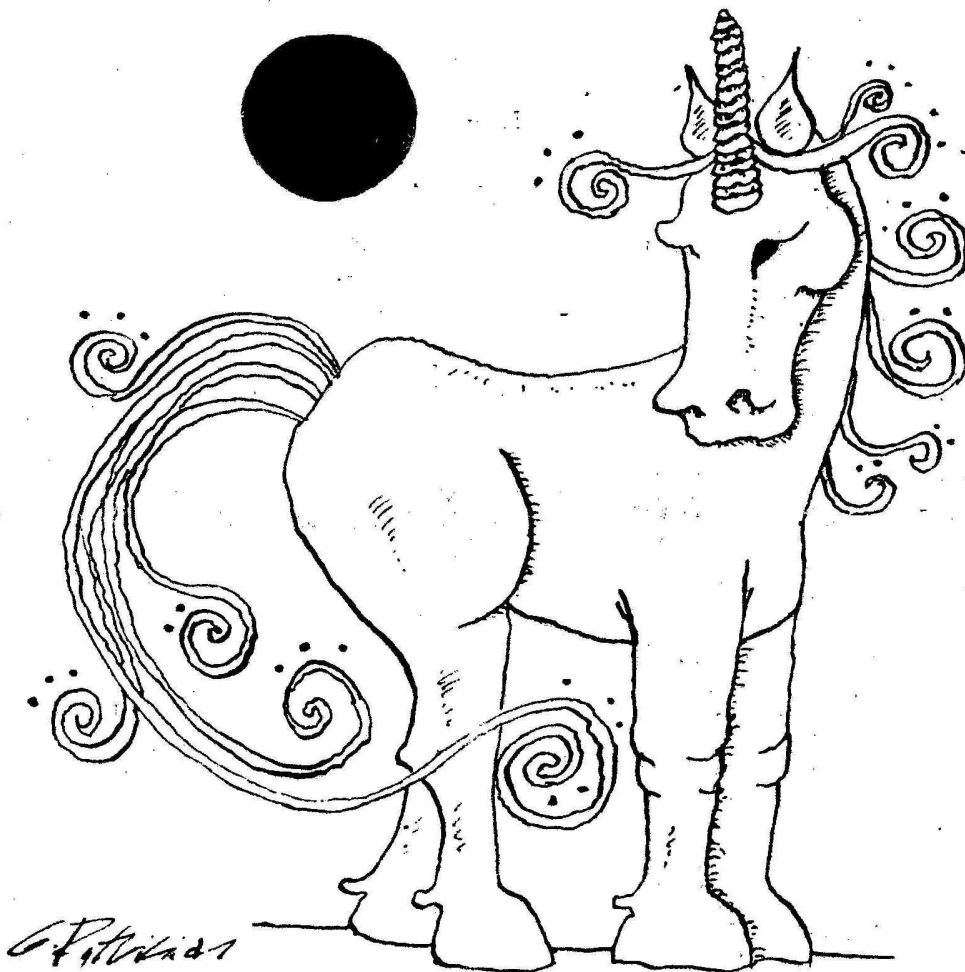
"There is so much negativity out there that when someone values someone else it is wonderful."



(Continued from page 11)

Answers to Foods That Heal Quiz

- | | |
|-------------------|--------------------------------|
| 1. Lemon balm | 10. Spirulina |
| 2. Chromium | 11. Aloe Vera |
| 3. Chamomile tea | 12. Ginkgo biloba |
| 4. Goldenseal | 13. Valerian |
| 5. Dandelion | 14. Acidophilus |
| 6. Ginseng | 15. Thyme |
| 7. Peppermint tea | 16. Ecchineacea |
| 8. Ginger | 17. Flaxseed |
| 9. Dong quai | 18. Cranberry juice or extract |



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CALENDAR

For locations, confirmations, or more information, call the appropriate message machine and someone will get back to you (with discretion if requested). For SBWN events call (206) 517-7767. For all other Seattle events, (BiNet, SBMU, Polyfi, BiOut, etc.) Call (206) 728-4533.

*denotes multi-gender events. \$=not a free event

Sat Sept 13	PolyFi Potluck, 6:30pm
Mon Sept 15	SBWN, 6:30pm, Social/Organizational Meeting
Sat Sept 20	Dancing at the Easy, 9:30pm
Sun Sept 21	SBWN meeting, 6:30pm, Queer Family
Mon Sept 29	SBWN meeting, 6:30pm, Meditation/Relaxation
Sun Oct 5	SBWN meeting, 6:30pm, TBA
Mon Oct 13	SBWN meeting, 6:30pm, TBA SBMU meeting, 7pm
Sat Oct 18	Dancing at the Easy, 9:30pm
Sun Oct 19	SBWN meeting, 6:30pm, TBA
Mon Oct 27	SBWN meeting, 6:30pm, TBA
Sun Nov 2	SBWN meeting, 6:30pm, TBA
Sat Nov 8	PolyFi Potluck, 6:30pm
Mon Nov 10	SBWN meeting, 6:30pm, TBA SBMU meeting, 7pm
Sat Nov 15	Dancing at the Easy, 9:30pm
Sun Nov 16	SBWN meeting, 6:30pm, TBA
Mon Nov 24	SBWN meeting, 6:30pm, TBA
Sun Nov 30	7th Annual Harvest Potluck, 2-6pm SBWN meeting, 6:30pm, TBA
Mon Dec 8	SBWN meeting, 6:30pm, TBA SBMU meeting, 7pm
Sun Dec 14	SBWN meeting, 6:30pm, TBA
Sat Dec 20	Dancing at the Easy, 9:30pm

Local Groups at your Service

SBWN (Seattle Bisexual Women's Network):

Support and discussion groups on alternate Sundays and alternate Mondays at 6:30pm. For more information, call our message machine. Note our NEW telephone number: 206-517-7767.

SBWN's Social Crowd meets on the first Friday of the month for dancing at Sappho's, 9:30pm. And on the third Saturday of the month for dancing at The Easy, 10 p.m. All are welcome.

SBMU (Seattle Bisexual Men's Union): a men's anti-sexist support and social group with discussion meetings on second Mondays of the month at Pilgrim Congregational Church, room 304 (enter from 10th Ave.), and monthly social events (location varies).

Polyfidelity Discussion Group: Support group and community for people in or interested in multipartner relationships. Discussions and literature on responsible nonmonogamy, intimate networks, alternative relationships and community. Bimonthly potluck discussions, 6:30 p.m. at the Pilgrim Congregational Church, 509 10th Ave E, Seattle; alternate month social events, venue varies.

BiNet, the Bisexual Network of Seattle: a multi-gender, multicultural, profeminist group. Support meetings every first and third Saturday of the month; call for location. Social meetings every 2nd and 4th Friday of the month, at Beyond the Edge Cafe, 703 E. Pike, 7-9pm. Call 206-728-4533 to get involved.

BiOut Speakers Bureau: available for engagements at schools, businesses, counseling centers, churches, etc. to provide information and answers about bisexuality.

